

Congresswoman Ros-Lehtinen
Testimony for Armed Services Committee Hearing on
FY12 National Defense Authorization Act
Thursday, April 14, 2011

I am here as the Representative of the 18th Congressional District.

Before proceeding, I would like to note, however, that as Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, I look forward to working with Chairman McKeon and Ranking Member Smith on issues that also involve our Committee.

Some of these are:

- The Iran report;
- Authorities, funding, reporting and programmatic implementation of the Cooperative Threat Reduction activities; and
- Such items relating to Afghanistan and Pakistan as the administration and implementation of the Pakistan Counterinsurgency Capabilities Fund, the Afghanistan Infrastructure Fund and Task Force for Business and Stability Operations in Afghanistan.

These are just a few items that we understand may be included in the NDAA.

Additionally, I look forward to working with you throughout the markup processes in our respective Committees to address areas in which the authorities of the NDAA overlap with State Department authorities or activities.

Finally, I look forward to working with you to avoid infringement of either of our Committees jurisdiction.

Back to the issue at hand:

My main concern today involves **Homestead Air Reserve Base (HARB)**

Homestead Air Reserve Base has two entry control points to allow traffic in and out of the installation.

However the current Coral Sea gate has been closed due to anti-terrorism concerns and its proximity to base lodging facilities.

The remaining Westover gate is substandard and not designed to function as a primary entry control point and does NOT meet force protection standards.

Yet this gate remains the sole gate for ALL pedestrian, private and commercial vehicle traffic.

With the current and projected future mission growth at the installation, HARB provides a high visibility target for potential attacks and is vulnerable to terrorist attack.

With only one guard shack as protection any moderately determined foe could gain access to the base.

This single guard shack within close proximity to the base bulk fuel storage compound and is only a 30 second drive to the F-16 Ramp, the heart of HARB.

The ramp holds HARB's \$800 million F-16 fighter jets and is where 200 Airmen maintain and operate these aircraft.

Overall, HARB has 2700 Airmen, Soldier, Sailors, Marines, Coast Guardsmen, Customs and Border Protection agents and Florida National Guardsmen who dedicate their life's work to serving our great country.

HARB is extremely vulnerable to attack and the loss of life.

Our service men and women deserve better.

On a different note:

Currently, there is no practical way to monitor exposures to terrorist or other threats from unknown biological, chemical or radiological agents in a timely fashion - on the battlefield or in civilian situations.

The existing standard relies on laborious, largely manual and time-consuming methods that are not appropriate for in-theater defense and other time-sensitive applications.

Continuation of research to develop devices that can detect non-specific unknown toxicants using nano-scaled based portable biosensor devices is vital to the security of our troops and our nation.

And lastly:

Forensic science programs today focus almost exclusively on civilian forensic science. There is a need to expand the use of forensic science beyond the historical judicial and medical uses, including support to intelligence operations and the war fighter.

Current programs ignore the unique needs of the U.S. military in the defense of our troops in world-wide.

Improving operations related to chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosives threats will help prepare the U.S. military for the challenges that they face in defense of our nation.

Addressing the current gaps in forensic science military applications will require a training center dedicated to increasing the pipeline of forensics-trained workers.